

MID-TERM EVALUATION CONSENSUS REPORT

Closing the Water Cycle Gap – Sustainable Management of Water Resources (WaterHarmony)

Name of Coordinator: Dr. Harsha Ratnaweera

Project code: WaterWorks2017-WaterHarmony

Duration of project: 36 months

Start date: 01.05.2019

End date: 30.04.2022 (extension until 31.12.2022 requested)

FOLLOW-UP GROUP

Please include the data of the FG members reviewing the report

Name	Organisation
Teppo Vehanen	Natural Resources Institute Finland
Mi-Yong Becker	Bochum University of Applied Sciences

1. Scientific and technological progress (Maximum 250 words)

The WaterHarmony aims to improve the communication and collaboration among research teams leading to better global water management practises by incorporating research institutes from 11 countries. The project and its deliverables are almost categorically delayed, and the project has applied extension of eight months, until the end of 2022. However, some partners have advanced albeit detrimental COVID conditions, all work packages are active and making some progress.

Specific progress and results by partner is explained in detail and where necessary, delays are explained and accounted for in a comprehensible manner. The WaterHarmony project has successfully used biosorption (Poland), verified sensors for water quality, (Norway, Sweden), worked on water management improvements (Romania) and data management (Netherlands). Nano filters and nanofiltration has been used to deal with targeted pollutants from wastewater (Spain, Australia). These results are acknowledged.

The project brings together a range of technological showcase and demonstration of management concept. Thus the projects work highly encourages multi-disciplinary work. However, the report indicates mainly bilateral exchange and collaboration among different partners. The project should be one single project and not a conglomeration of smaller ideas so project management and continuing joint ethos will be important.

The project delays have also severely affected the dissemination of the results. The project has, however, published some scientific papers (7 papers listed). On the plus side it is also acknowledged that one patent has been approved (Sweden) and the Norwegian partner's patent is pending decision of the Technology Transfer Office on IPR.

2. Collaboration, coordination and mobility within the Consortium (Maximum 250 words)

The coordination of the WaterHarmony project appears to be partly efficient, with difficulties arising from COVID. Since the COVID outbreak physical meetings have not been possible. The wide geographical distribution of partners causes difficulties, and communication has involved only

groups of partners and emails.

Collaboration efforts seem to be strong since project partners have already acquired travel and mobility grants outside JPI funding for Australia, China, Romania, USA, Poland and Norway to be implemented in 2021. The consortium expects travelling restrictions to cease 2021 for better collaboration. The project should also have a plan B on how to improve collaboration in the case COVID situation remains bad in 2021 also?

The mobility among the partners has similar, COVID induced, problems. The project is prepared to increase mobility after the COVID situation allows it, expectantly during 2021.

The WaterHarmony project is a truly transnational project, which depends largely on mobility. At this point, due to force majeure of the pandemic, it is impossible to assess whether the project meets the transnational nature and its added value. However, the initiative of the project partners to acquire travel and mobility grants outside the JPI funding indicate that there is a strong commitment to generate a transnational impact through the project. To utilize its high potential of transnational added value project needs to increase collaboration, which is now severely dampened due to COVID.

3. Coordination with other international project funded by WaterWorks2017, or other instruments (Maximum 250 words)

According to the project report the external collaboration activity is also delayed. The WaterHarmony project has identified potential WaterWorks projects to collaborate during the Stockholm meeting 2019. These plans should be evoked as soon as possible.

The project cooperates with external projects, but these are not identified in the mid-term report. Some project activities are either supported by supplementary funding from other projects or partners own funding, and four partners (Australia, China, Singapore and USA) fully finance their activities from other projects or own in-kind.

4. Coverage of the themes and sub-themes of the call (Maximum 250 words)

The project focuses on sub-themes 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 3 (supporting tools). Results for sub-themes 1.1 have been established mainly by the Polish partner at catchment level → (WPI). Work packages 5 and 6 are severely delayed by force majeure, and their assessment should be postponed. Also work package 2 (sub-theme 2.2) has started but is severely delayed and its assessment should be postponed. Work packages 3 to 5 (for sub-theme 2.3) and 6 (sub-themes 2.4 and 3) are severely delayed by force majeure and their assessment should be postponed.

5. Stakeholder/industry engagement (Maximum 250 words)

The main objectives of the WaterHarmony project are related to stakeholder engagement: to mobilize stakeholders and to increase public engagement. It is obvious that due to delays the project has not reached these objectives. Innovation camps were planned in Israel for broader stakeholder involvement, but they were postponed due to travel restrictions. The management cases studies have plans to further strengthen the dialogues with stakeholders after achieving more concrete results. The Romanian partner has held a stakeholder workshop to discuss the importance of water quality monitoring and also to establish a new monitoring system. Also Swedish partner have implemented some stakeholder communication. Stakeholder engagement is one of the future challenges for the WaterHarmony project.

6. Recommendations for improvements/amendments of the report (Please complete Table below)

Page	Modification	Rationale for change
Overall, in particular section 2	Please indicate progress by work packages and partners clearly in all reports.	This information is indispensable for reviewers for understanding whether the project is on track
Overall	Add plan for managing the project and expected results under prolonged Covid-10 conditions	To ensure project goals, a revised project plan, may be even including revised project goals should be provided. Transparency for the funding organizations is important.

7. General Assessment Comments (Maximum 250 words)

The reporting structure is not very transparent. It is very difficult to link the progress made to specific work packages. The WaterHarmony project needs to find a way to pass the severe delays in order to reach its goals.